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FEBRUARY MEETING.

The stated monthly meeting of the Society was held this day, Thursday, February 9, at 11 o'clock, A.M.; the President, the Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The Librarian announced the donations received since the last meeting, from the following sources: —

The Boston Athenæum; the Chicago Historical Society; the Essex Institute; the New-England Historic-Genealogical Society; the New-England Loyal Publication Society; the New-Jersey Historical Society; the Prince Society; the Proprietors of the Heraldic Journal; the Publishers of the Savannah Republican; William Appleton, Esq.; Hon. Edward E. Bourne; Henry B. Dawson, Esq.; Clement H. Hill, Esq.; Charles J. Hoadley, Esq.; Benjamin P. Johnson, Esq.; Hon. Frederick W. Lincoln, jun.; James S. Loring, Esq.; Hon. Alexander H. Rice; John G. Roberts, Esq.; William V. Spencer, Esq.; J. Hammond Trumbull, Esq.; Hon. Henry Wilson; and from Messrs. E. B. Bigelow, Deane, Ellis, H. Gray, jun., Loring, C. Robbins, Sibley, Wheatland, Whitmore, and Winthrop, of the Society.

Letters from Mrs. Samuel Appleton were read by the President, acknowledging with thanks the gift of the seventh volume of the fourth series of the Society's Collections, and the last-issued volume of the Proceedings, which had been sent to her.

The President also read a letter from Mr. Charles H. Hart, of Philadelphia, offering for the Society's accept-

ance a broadside copy of Theses of Harvard College for the year 1762 ; for which a proper acknowledgment was directed to be made.

John Forster, Esq., of London, was elected a Corresponding Member.

Mr. DEANE communicated, and read a portion of, the following letter (from a copy in *fac-simile*), written by Andrew Jackson, when President of the United States. The copy was presented to the Society by Major W. L. Burt, of this city.

Andrew Jackson to Andrew J. Crawford.

(Private.)

WASHINGTON, May 1st, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have just received your letter of the 6th ultimo, and have only time in reply to say that General Coffee well understood Mr. Shackleford, and urged your nomination in his stead. I had nominated you ; but, on the serious importunity of Col King, your Senator, with General Coffee, the change was adopted, and you nominated for the office you now fill. Before the receipt of yours General Coffee had written me, and requested that I would appoint you to the office vacated by Mr. Shackleford. If we had a Senate in whose principles we could rely, this would have been done ; but I did not believe it would be prudent to bring your name before the Senate again, and am happy you are content where you are.

The Senate cannot remove you, and I am sure your faithfulness and honesty will never permit you to do an act that will give good cause for your removal ; and, if Moor and Poindexter discovered that you were related to me, that would be sufficient cause for them to reject you. Therefore it is, that I let well enough alone, although I know it would be a convenience to you to be located where you are ; still a rejection by the Senate might prove a greater inconvenience, and, for the reasons assigned, it was not done.

I have had a laborious task here — but nullification is dead ; and its actors and excitors will only be remembered by the people to be execrated for their wicked designs to sever and destroy the only good government on the globe, and that prosperity and happiness we enjoy over every other portion of the world. Haman's gallows ought

to be the fate of all such ambitious men, who would involve their country in civil wars, and all the evils in its train, that they might reign and ride on its whirlwinds and direct the storm. The free people of these United States have spoken, and consigned these wicked demagogues to their proper doom. Take care of your nullifiers; you have them amongst you; let them meet with the indignant frowns of every man who loves his country. The tariff, it is *now* well known was a mere pretext. Its burthen was on your coarse woollens — by the law of July, 1832, coarse woollen was reduced to five per cent. for the benefit of the South. Mr. Clay's bill takes it up and classes it with woollens at 50 per cent., reduces it gradually down to 20 per cent., and there it is to remain, and Mr. Calhoun and all the nullifiers agree to the principle. The cash duties and home valuation will be equal to 15 per cent. more, and after the year 1842, you pay on coarse woollens 35 per cent. If this is not protection, I cannot understand. Therefore the tariff was only the pretext, and disunion and a Southern confederacy the real object. The next pretext will be the negro, or slavery, question.

My health is not good, but is improving a little. Present me kindly to your lady and family, and believe me to be your friend. I will always be happy to hear from you.

ANDREW JACKSON.

The Rev. ANDREW J. CRAWFORD.

Dr. Peabody read the following letters: —

James Sullivan to Tobias Lear.

BOSTON, 18th October, 1789.

DEAR SIR, — When we received the news of your coming this way with our illustrious President, we flattered ourselves with the idea of your making our house your home while you should stay in town. But I have been with His Excellency, our Governor, to-day; he is obliging enough to forward this by express he sends to meet the President, and he tells me that his intention is to invite the President to command his house while he shall continue here, and that he hopes and expects you will take up your abode there also.

When I know that to be the case, it would be but a piece of formality to give you an invitation otherwise than by saying, that, if any thing should happen which shall prevent the Governor's superior invitation, Mrs. Sullivan will be much hurt by your going to any other house than ours. It is possible, from an unfortunate call we

have in the country, that we may be absent when you arrive; but Miss Sullivan has it in charge to receive you as our dear and very particular friend, and we shall rejoice abundantly to find you here when we return, — which we shall do with all possible expedition, as I would by no means fail of paying my respects to the President, or of having the pleasure of seeing you.

The Governor is making arrangement to show every mark of respect to the President; and I believe he will be received with the rejoicings and acclamations of the people.

Should the President take any other lodgings besides at the Governor's house, it will hurt the feelings of the Governor, and of all those who have seen with pleasure the process of the late revolution. The house is very convenient, and there can be no difficulty in the President's receiving the compliments of the gentlemen in the Governor's commodious hall.

There will be a number of people in the street paraded to see the President as he shall come into town; and it would be a great convenience to the Governor to know, as soon as possible, on what day and hour the President expects to arrive. If you can give this intelligence, I wish you to address a line to the Governor, [or] to your friend Major Otis, to be communicated to the Governor. But if it should be after this week, and you do not choose to write the Governor, I wish you to indulge me with a line.

I am very sensible that the President would wish to avoid this parade; but the wishes of the people must be complied with, and you may as well arrest the tide as stop it.

I am, dear sir, with great regard, your friend and humble servant,

JAS. SULLIVAN.

Mr. LEAR.

Christopher Gore to Tobias Lear.

BOSTON, October 22, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR, — In consequence of your letter dated at Hartford, 11th inst., I have engaged Mrs. Ingersoll's house, at the corner of Court and Tremont Streets, for the President of the United States, during the time he shall honor the town of Boston with his presence. In this house are three parlors on the lower floor, three bed-chambers on the second, and sufficient on the third to accommodate servants. In the neighborhood is a very good livery stable, the owner of which I have not been able to see this evening, but will engage this or

another in the morning; and, if I have not the pleasure of seeing you before your arrival in Boston, you shall hear of accommodations for four horses, by a line left at Ingersoll's. But, as Judge Lowell and myself intend doing ourselves the honor of paying our respects to the President of the United States at his morning stage of Saturday, I hope the pleasure of mentioning to you this in person.

The people of Boston are, beyond all conception, enraptured with the idea of beholding their deliverer and protector; and none more than

Your obliged friend, C. GORE.

TOBIAS LEAR, Esq., Secretary to the President of the United States.

To be left at Williams', Marlborough.

Mr. SPARKS referred to a letter written, at his request, by the late Benjamin Russell, and published in the Appendix to the tenth volume of Washington's Writings. It relates to "the difference of opinion between Governor Hancock and President Washington on a point of etiquette during the visit of the President to Boston in 1789."

The President stated, that the Standing Committee, to whom the subject of Mr. Waterston's motion at the last meeting had been referred, had decided to send to Goldwin Smith a complete set of the Society's publications, to be deposited in any public library in Oxford that he may designate.

Mr. W. G. BROOKS, from the Standing Committee, called the attention of members to a large photograph album then lying upon the table, which he had procured in order that each member of the Society should furnish his photographic likeness, to be preserved in this volume as a memorial.

Dr. WEBB made the following communication on Professor Rafn:—

At the December meeting of the Society, in answer to an

inquiry made by Colonel Aspinwall, I stated that I had been in correspondence with the late Professor C. C. Rafn, of Copenhagen, during a period of more than thirty years; and that had I known that any notice of his decease would be taken at that meeting, I might have selected and brought forward from my files some letters suited to the occasion, which, possibly, would prove of interest to the members. Since that meeting, I have devoted the brief time I could spare to an examination of a portion of the letters in my possession, and to a reconsideration of some of the subjects to which many of them relate, but which, from various causes, have been dismissed, or rather crowded, from my mind for several years. The contents of these letters still prove as interesting to me as ever, and would undoubtedly be examined with much satisfaction by those among us who have directed attention to the Ante-Columbian history of America. But on reflection, since the promise I then made, I have come to the conclusion, that to a majority of our associates, whose researches in the past do not extend further back than to Post-Columbian colonial times, these letters cannot be so acceptable as communications derivable from other sources: I therefore produce only a sufficient number to redeem my pledge.

I avail myself, however, of this opportunity, to discharge a duty which I feel incumbent on me relative to Professor Rafn, and to that Society, of which, for so long a period, he was one of the most eminent collaborators.

Of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, to whose labors some reference was made at the December meeting by our President, and respecting which some details were given by Dr. Sparks,—both of whose names, as also that of Colonel Aspinwall, are enrolled upon the list of its “founding” members,—it is sufficient for me to say, that it stands in the front rank of European learned societies; that, in some branches of ancient lore, it takes the lead of all others; and that, in regard

to these, its opinions and judgment are deemed pre-eminent. The extent and value of its researches, more especially the ethnic and philological, are unsurpassed by the labors of kindred institutions; so that even those who for years, from the want of proper information, and disinclination or unwillingness to obtain it, were accustomed to ignore its doings, or allude to them deridingly as "pleasant fictions, with which sober history has been sometimes wont, when treading the shadowy confines of the uncertain past, to embellish her pages," have gradually moderated their tone, and at last, with scarcely an exception, have recognized the value of its labors, and the soundness of the most important of its conclusions. For many years, it has been actively and almost unremittingly engaged in making examinations and explorations in Iceland (justly styled "the nursing mother of the ancient history of the North"), in Greenland, and elsewhere; to the prosecution of which not only much time but much money has been devoted. The success with which these efforts have thus far been crowned has proved highly encouraging to the participants therein, and been pronounced, by the most distinguished *savans* of the day, as of prime value in illuminating some of the dark pages of the world's history.

A portion of the results of its investigations is embodied in the various works which have been given to the public, and which in number have nearly rounded their century, although the first of them was issued so recently as 1825.

It may be well to observe, that the principal object of the Society, *originally*, was the translation, interpretation, and publication of old Icelandic manuscripts; but it *now* embraces, in addition, whatever else may serve to elucidate the language, history, and antiquities of the North in general;—in the words of Professor Rafn, "whatever may tend to a more extensive diffusion of the interest taken in Northern archæology, and thereby to awaken and cherish an interest for forefathers

and fatherland." Of late years, it has directed much attention to the preparation and publication of a series of lexicographical works.

The ancient writings published by it are issued in a triple series: the first containing the original Icelandic; the second, a Danish translation; and the third, a translation in Latin, or some extensively used modern language, — by which means there is placed within the reach of literary men of other countries a body of ancient writings replete with matter illustrative of history, language, or antiquities.

"Its objects are of a nature calculated to interest others than the natives merely of the Scandinavian kingdoms. The ancient codes of law of the North; its Eddas, with their significant mythology; and its stores of ancient historical lore, as well as the Northern antiquities, are attracting the attention of the civilized world: and their importance to the antiquary, the historian, the lawyer, and the philologist of almost every country, has been generally admitted," at least on the other side of the Atlantic.

Besides the valuable separate works, the Society has published, and still continues to issue, two serials, — the one entitled "Annals of Northern Archæology and History," wherein appear communications in Icelandic, Danish, and Swedish; and the other, styled "Memoirs of the Antiquaries of the North," consisting of papers written in French, English, or German. It also issues a review, containing accounts of its labors, and other information pertaining more immediately to its own affairs, to its archives, and to its library; and short articles of an antiquarian, historical, or linguistic character.

It also possesses a museum rich in Northern antiquities, chronologically arranged, in twelve rooms of the Palace of Christiansborg, so as to represent the three successive periods of heathenism; viz., the stone age, the bronze age, and the iron age. In connection with these, there are also

arranged, according to successive periods, the articles illustrative of later times. It has, besides this large collection at Copenhagen, similar, though smaller, collections in various parts of the kingdom.

It has also, in the palace just named, a cabinet for American antiquities, which is divided into a Scandinavian section, containing relics from Greenland, illustrative of the remote ages when the Northmen were its inhabitants; an Esquimaux section; a Vinland section, which contains a larger collection than is probably elsewhere to be found, of the stone antiquities of our own country; a Mexican section; a Caribbean section, in which are deposited collections from the West Indies, more especially the Danish Antilles; and a South-American section, wherein are deposited stone and metallic specimens from Brazil, Chili, and Peru.

This Society has, likewise, a cabinet of more than fifty thousand coins and medals, besides twenty thousand casts of valuable ones elsewhere owned; a cabinet of classical antiquities, arranged in Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman sections; and an ethnographical cabinet, already requiring, for the preservation and exhibition of its specimens, more than twenty large rooms.

In 1846 it established what is denominated "The Historico-Archæological Archives"; for the accommodation of which rooms have been assigned in the palace. These are arranged in two sections,—first, an old Northern Icelandic section, wherein are deposited documents of a date not later than A.D. 1450, and historical and archæological collections relating to the Feroe Isles, Iceland, Greenland, and Vinland; and, second, an antiquarian-topographical section, in which is carefully preserved whatever relates to Northern antiquities in general, and the historico-antiquarian topography of the Scandinavian countries in particular. The Arnæ-Magnæan collection, which forms but a part of the archives, numbers two thousand volumes of Icelandic, or old Northern manuscripts.

This meagre outline, for the minute details and filling up of which reference must be made to the Society's reports and publications, is sufficient to convey some idea of the extent and richness of material and apparatus at command to enable it to undertake and prosecute, understandingly, advantageously, and, as for the most part it has thus far done, successfully, the line of investigations by it marked out, and steadily followed for some years.

Besides all these appliances, what is, at the least, equally important, it has enjoyed and profited by the labors of men of renowned talents and high attainments in their respective departments and specialties. Among these it must suffice at this time to name the late distinguished philologist, Professor R. Rask; the learned antiquarian, Finn Magnussen; the eminent archæologist, E. C. Werlauff; the Icelandic scholar and lexicographer, Erik Jonson; the late privy councillor of State and professor of languages, M. Schlegel; the profound Swedish scholar, Perinskiöld; and lastly, and to us the best known of all, our lately deceased and much-esteemed honorary member, Carl Christian Rafn, who for so many years has taken such a prominent and active part in the doings of the Society, that he and it seem but to be portions of one organization.

Most of the numerous works issued under the auspices of the Society bear, in a greater or less degree, evidences of his diligence, his indefatigable labor, his deep research, and his judicious supervisory care. To his unwearied industry, discriminating judgment, devoted, self-sacrificing spirit, and indomitable perseverance, we are indebted for some of the most valuable of the Society's publications. Among those edited by him may be mentioned —

Fornaldar Sögur Nordrlanda, or Mythico-historical Sagas, treating of events in the North anterior to the colonization of Iceland in the ninth century: edited in the old Northern or ancient Icelandic original text, and published in 3 vols. 8vo.

The same Sagas translated by him into Danish, making also 3 vols. 8vo.

Færeyinga Saga, or History of the Inhabitants of the Feroe Islands: in Icelandic, the Feroe dialect, and Danish, with a *fac-simile* and a map of the Islands.

Grönlands Historiske Mindesmærker, or Greenland's Historical Monuments: edited by C. C. Rafn and Finn Magnusen, in the old Northern text, with a Danish translation, explanatory notes, and 12 illustrative plates. 3 vols. 8vo.

Antiquités Russes d'après les Monuments Historiques des Islandais et des Anciens Scandinaves, or Russian Antiquities from the Historical Monuments of Iceland and of Ancient Greenland. 2 vols. imperial 4to.—This valuable work contains 1,035 pages of letterpress, illustrated with twenty-three plates.

The work for which we, in an especial manner, should hold in high regard the memory of Professor Rafn, and pay due homage to his many rare qualifications as an historian, annotator, and commentator, is that to which reference was made at our December meeting by the President, in his notice of the deceased; viz., the "*Antiquitates Americanæ*," in which is brought together, for the first time in a printed form, a large mass of evidence to show that America was discovered and colonized by the Northmen late in the tenth, and early in the eleventh centuries. The work is an imperial quarto volume, of 526 pages, and is illustrated by eight *fac-similes* of the most important manuscripts, or Icelandic Skin-Books, used in the preparation of the work, showing their exact condition at the time of use; some of them being still perfect, and others in various stages of decay, from age and neglect. It contains also maps of ancient Iceland and Greenland; a chart of the Northern Ocean and the Atlantic coast, showing the tracks of the principal voyagers; a map of Vinland, with the ancient appellations by which the various portions visited were designated (the modern names being added for convenience of reference); and, furthermore, six engravings of Greenland and American monuments. The

body of the work consists of the original Icelandic text, and a full Danish translation, in parallel columns, with a complete Latin translation subjoined. Preceding the whole is a very copious abstract in English, exhibiting an historical view of the voyages of discovery.

The work is worthy of something better than this extremely brief, as it were skeleton, exhibit of it; for, though well known to a comparatively small number of our scholars, the reading community at large have no acquaintance with it: were its merits more generally understood, the book put in a more convenient form, and an English version in full furnished, we believe it would receive attention somewhat in proportion to its intrinsic worth. This course was once contemplated, but never consummated, for reasons that may be gathered from one of the accompanying letters of Professor Rafn.

The work was very ably reviewed by the principal critical journals of Europe and this country; and the conclusions arrived at, in almost every instance, were highly flattering to the learned editor, and to the society under whose authority it appeared. The article in the "North-American Review" emanated from the pen of our late distinguished associate, the Hon. Edward Everett; two very able articles on it were furnished to the "United-States Magazine and Democratic Review" by his brother, the late Hon. Alexander H. Everett; an interesting one was contributed to the "New-York Review" by the Hon. George Folsom; and one to the "Biblical Repository" by the Hon. Henry R. Schoolcraft, whose death has been announced within a few days past. Critical notices also appeared in the "American Monthly Magazine," in the "New-York Monthly," in the fourth volume of the "Rhode-Island Historical Society's Collections," and in the "Western Messenger" (Louisville, Ky.), by its editor, the late Leonard Bliss, jun., a former member of this Society.

Of European journals, which spoke of it in the strongest commendatory terms, I need only name the "Foreign Quarterly Review" and the "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London"; the former of which states that this volume puts the matter of the early Scandinavian voyages beyond a doubt, and the latter that the publication entitles the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries "to the gratitude of the whole civilized world."

Its appearance was the occasion of many lectures being given in various parts of the Union. Among those the most worthy of a passing reference were, one delivered by our respected associate already alluded to, Governor Everett, in a public course of this Society; two by the Hon. A. H. Everett, before the Rhode-Island Historical Society; and two by the Hon. George Folsom, before the New-York Historical Society; all of which were received with great favor.

Itinerant lecturers of course availed themselves of the opportunity to obey the advisory injunction of Iago to Roderigo.

The leading scholars and historians, both abroad and in this country, with very few, we believe but two, exceptions, acknowledged that Professor Rafn had satisfactorily made out his case. These exceptions were the late Washington Irving and the Hon. George Bancroft.

The former gentleman was reluctant to assent to the soundness of Professor Rafn's conclusions, for the reason, among others, that he apprehended their tendency would be to detract from the credit due to Columbus as a discoverer. A correspondence took place between him and myself on the subject, which resulted in his being convinced that no such design was contemplated; the Northern Society explicitly declaring, that, although "the latest researches have rendered it in a high degree probable that the knowledge of the previous Scandinavian discovery of America, preserved in

Iceland, and communicated to Columbus when he visited that island in 1477," was "one of the most powerful causes which inspired the mind of that great man with that admirable skill which, bidding defiance to every difficulty, enabled him to effect the rediscovery of the New World, under circumstances that led to its immediate, uninterrupted, and constantly increasing colonization and occupation by the energetic and intelligent races of Europe,"—"yet his glory cannot in any degree be impaired by the prior achievements;" and, for what he so successfully accomplished, "his memory will be imperishable among the nations of the earth."*

The consequence was, that Mr. Irving, in the next edition of his abridged "Life of Columbus" (Boston, 1839), inserted a "Note" at the end of his Introduction, in which he says, "Since the first publication of this work, researches made concerning the early voyages of the 'Northmen' have established the fact, to the conviction of most minds, that 'Vinland,' the country accidentally discovered by those wide-wandering navigators about the year 1000, was really a part of the continent of North America." He adds, "This fact, however, does not lessen the merit of the great enterprise and achievement of Columbus. . . . We see no reason to believe that he heard any thing of these discoveries, or saw the Sagas in question."

Mr. Bancroft early took a position adverse to the claims set up for the Northmen, as will be found by referring to his admirable work, the "History of the United States" (vol. i. chap. 1), wherein, among other statements, are the following :

* "Still," the Society adds, "we Northmen ought not to forget his meritorious predecessors, who in their way had difficulties to contend with not less formidable, since, without knowledge of the properties of the magnet,—without aid of compass, charts, or mathematical science properly so called,—they dared to navigate the great ocean, and thus by degrees discovered and partly colonized Iceland in the ninth century, Greenland in the tenth, and subsequently several of the islands and portions of the coasts of America during the latter part of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century."

"The national pride of an Icelandic historian has, indeed, claimed for his ancestors the glory of having discovered the Western hemisphere. But the story of the colonization of America by Northmen rests on narratives mythological in form and obscure in meaning. . . . The chief document is an interpolation in the history of Sturleson, whose zealous inquiry could hardly have neglected the discovery of a continent. . . . The geographical details are too vague to sustain a conjecture."

It is not my purpose to comment on these and other similar passages in the volume from which I have quoted. It is sufficient for the present simply to observe, that "the chief document" asserted to be interpolated in Sturleson's work is not to be found in it. There are passages, *not interpolated*, of such a character as to show that Sturleson knew of the Scandinavian voyages; but, were there not, it might not seem very surprising, since the work is a history of the kings of Norway. Notwithstanding the constantly accumulating evidence in favor of the Scandinavians, it is believed that Mr. Bancroft's opinion remains unchanged.

The adverse views entertained by some are, in a degree, counterbalanced by the sentiments expressed by many of the most distinguished literati of Europe, and more especially by the declaration of him who, "of all modern travellers, has thrown the greatest light on the physical circumstances, first discovery, and earliest history of America," the late Alexander von Humboldt, who is justly pronounced, on all subjects of this class, the *summus auctor*.

In that masterly work, constituting the crowning glory of a long life devoted to philosophic and scientific research, "Cosmos," he says, "The discovery of America, in its more northern portions, is certainly to be ascribed to the Northmen. . . . Whilst the Caliphates of Bagdad still flourished under the Abassides, and while the Samanides, whose reign was so favorable to poetry, bore sway in Persia, America

was discovered in the year 1000, by a northern route, as far south as $41\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north latitude, by Leif, son of Eric the Red."

Again: "By the critical and highly praiseworthy labors of C. Rafn, and of the Royal Society, established at Copenhagen for the study of Northern antiquities, the Sagas and original sources of information respecting the voyages of the Northmen to *Helluland* (Newfoundland), to *Markland* (the mouth of the St. Lawrence and Nova Scotia), and to *Vinland* (Massachusetts), have been severally printed and satisfactorily commented on."*

So also the Norwegian scholar, Professor Jacob Aall, furnishes his valuable testimony to the merits of the work, and says, "By collecting all the Saga accounts thereunto belonging, by fixing the places visited, and by raising conjecture to historical evidence, Professor Rafn has successfully closed one of the most interesting investigations that have been accomplished by antiquarian research in our time." Further: "The North has every reason to be grateful to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and particularly to Professor Rafn, who, with such indefatigable perseverance, with so much knowledge of the subject, and critical acumen, has elucidated a portion of ancient history hitherto so obscure, and at the same time so interesting."

Our former Minister to the Court of Berlin, the late Hon. Henry Wheaton, LL.D., who had ample opportunities, which he diligently improved, for acquainting himself with the claims of the Northmen, entertained not a doubt of their validity. Indeed, in his history of the Danes and Normans, he makes a statement to the effect that the voyagers landed near Boston.†

I would add, that he who is looked upon as the founder

* "Cosmos," vol. ii. pp. 233-236. London, 1849.

† History of the North Men; or, Danes and Normans. By Henry Wheaton, LL.D.

of this Society, the late Rev. Jeremy Belknap, D.D., speaks of the Northmen's discoveries in a manner which indicates that he deemed the subject one well worthy of the attention of American scholars.

As regards their ability, and their possession of the requisite appliances to make such voyages as the discoveries referred to would demand, he observes:—

“Their situation near the coast of the sea, and the advantages which that element presented to them, beyond all which they could expect from a rough soil, in a cold climate, led them at an early period to the science and practice of navigation. They built their vessels with the best of oak, and constructed them in such a manner as to encounter the storms and billows of the Northern Ocean. They covered them with decks, and furnished them with high forecastles and sterns. They made use of sails, as well as oars, and had learned to trim their sails to the wind in almost any direction. In these arts of building ships and of navigation, they were superior to the people bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, who depended chiefly on their oars, and used sails only with a fair wind.”*

“The distance between Greenland and Newfoundland is not greater than between Iceland and Norway; and there could be no more difficulty in navigating the western than the eastern parts of the Northern Ocean, with such vessels as were then in use, and by such seamen as the Normans are said to have been, though they knew nothing of the magnetic needle.

“Upon the whole, though we can come to no positive conclusion in a question of such remote antiquity, yet there are many circumstances to confirm, and none to disprove, the relations given of the voyages of Biron.”†

Professor Rafn's Memoir or Essay on the subject, entitled “America Discovered in the Tenth Century,” excited a great deal of interest. It was translated into *English* by G. Gordon MacDougal; into *German* by Dr. G. Mohnike; into *French* by Professor Xavier Marmier, of Paris; into *Dutch*, one version by Judge Montanus Hettema, of Leeu-

* American Biography. By Jeremy Belknap, D.D. Vol. i. pp. 47, 48. Boston, 1794.

† *Ib.* p. 56.

warden, and another by D. Buddingh, of Gravenhage; into *Polish* by Professor J. K. Trovjanski, of Cracow; into *Russian* by M. Sjögren, and published as a separate pamphlet, as well as inserted in the Journal of the Imperial Ministry of Instruction, and afterwards translated therefrom into *Bohemian*.

Five different *Spanish* versions appeared; viz., one at Caraccas, by Don José Vargas, ex-President of the Venezuelan Republic; a second at Madrid, by Don Pedro José Pidal; a third at S. Jago, Chili, by Don Joaquin Prieto y Warnes; a fourth at Valparaiso; and a fifth at Lima, Peru, by Don Francisco de Rivero. Into *Portuguese* it was translated by Manoel Ferreira Lagos, and published at Rio de Janeiro; another translation appearing in the Journal of the Historico-Geographical Institute of Brazil. It was rendered into *Italian* by Count Jacopo Gräberg, and into *Magyar* by Xavier Marmier; the former published at Pisa, the latter at Pesth.

The larger work also served as the basis for numerous volumes in English and in foreign languages, of which I will name, as being the most accessible to American readers, the two following; viz., "The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century; with Notices of the Early Settlements of the Irish in the Western Hemisphere. By North Ludlow Beamish. London, 1841."—"The Northmen in New England; or, America in the Tenth Century. By Joshua Toulmin Smith. Boston, 1839."

Mr. Smith is an English barrister, who, at the time of the preparation of his work, resided in Roxbury, Massachusetts. He subsequently returned to his own country, and caused to be published in London a revised edition, with maps and plates, under the title of "The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century."

I ought not to omit remarking, that a double debt of gratitude is due to the memory of Professor Rafn, first for having

assiduously devoted many years of his life to an examination and mastery of the contents of the Icelandic Codices, — for the untiring research made, and profound, cautious, and discriminating investigations instituted, and zealously prosecuted to the end, for the purpose of sustaining and substantiating the Sagamen's statements; and, secondly, because after finishing his nearly decennial labors, and having his manuscript material ready for the press, when the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries (under whose auspices it finally appeared) was unable to assume the expense of issuing it, their available funds having previously been appropriated for, and absorbed by, other important and costly undertakings, Professor Rafn generously furnished from his private means the funds necessary to present the work to the world. Had he not stepped forward in this emergency, the work would have remained a sealed book for an indefinite period.

The earliest letter which I had the pleasure of receiving from Professor Rafn bears date June 15, 1829. This has been mislaid. From my file I have selected and brought with me several, for the inspection or perusal of any members who may feel a special interest in the matters to which they relate; and from these I will read a few extracts.

Under date of April 16, 1835, Professor Rafn writes: —

“Your three letters of November, 1834, with the other documents, were received on the 30th of March. We are under great obligations for the elucidations so readily communicated to us, and which are of great importance. We have now, through your goodness, received a complete guide; and the communications have come time enough to be made use of. Some more sheets of the work have, in the mean while, been printed; and we are now about to commence with the ancient inscriptions. . . .

“You mention several times Haup Bay and Mount Haup. We take the liberty to ask, whether this name is — as we may presume — of Indian derivation, or if there are any trustworthy accounts of its having been given to these places in recent times? Are there no traditions preserved among the Indians about the name?

"Are the shores on the coast of South Kingston, Charlestown, and Westerly, or more to the south, of a whitish appearance, when seen from the sea?

"Is honey-dew found anywhere in the vicinity, particularly, perhaps, on the Island of Nantucket?

"The Indian names of places may possibly be of consequence. If it should not be attended with too much difficulty, we wish more such names mentioned than are marked on the maps which were sent, particularly in the vicinity of the entrance of Haup, and the district round that bay itself, and on the banks of Taunton River.

"For the purpose of more particular examination, we should like to obtain, for our Museum of Antiquities, some North-American antiquities, particularly of the sort which you mention in your letter of Sept. 22, 1830; and we shall be very happy to give from it, in return, duplicates of Northern European antiquities."

I had sent, for Professor Rask, a copy of Roger Williams's "Key into the Language of America; or, A Help to the Language of the Natives in New England:" in allusion to which, Professor Rafn says, "My friend, the great linguist, Rask, is no longer in this world."

On the 20th of June, 1835, he furnished a complete list of the publications of the Society of Northern Antiquaries, a set of which was sent me as a present. Among these were some minor works in the Greenland tongue. He remarks,—

"It may perhaps be worth while to direct attention to the language spoken by the Esquimaux of Greenland, with a view to a comparison between it and the Esquimaux dialects of America."

Several linguistic productions of Rask were sent.*

"These," he observes, "will furnish the means of appreciating his System, in so far as regards a number of the languages of Europe, Asia, and Africa. It is to be regretted, that his premature death prevented his treating in like manner, at least, one of the dialects of

* Among them, his work entitled "*Commentatio de pleno Systemate decem Sibilantium in Linguis Montanis, item de Methodo Ibericam et Armenicam Linguam literis Europæis exprimendi.*"

America. Some brief notes upon this subject, found among his papers, will be given to the public.

"We also transmit an Abstract of the Transactions of our Society. You will find in it an essay on the stone implements used by the Pagan Northmen, with plates, being the first part of a treatise on 'Old Northern Antiquities,' from the period *antecedent* to the historic era. As we are particularly desirous of making you acquainted with this class of our antiquities, we send herewith a set of specimens of the various denominations there adverted to.*

"The queries we have already put to you comprise all the points concerning which we were most desirous of obtaining information. The answers which you were kind enough to transmit us were most satisfactory," &c.

July 9, 1836, Professor Rafn writes, in reference to the "Antiquitates Americanæ," —

"The printing of our announced work will, we hope, be entirely finished in the course of a couple of months. . . .

"Your idea and proposal, in regard to an English translation, meet our cordial approbation; but we cannot by any means think that such a translation will render the text edition superfluous. On the contrary, we must strenuously endeavor that the edition in the ancient original language may obtain the widest possible circulation in the American States.

"As the publication of the edition in the original language will undoubtedly give rise to a series of additional researches concerning this matter, we have formed a Committee for the Ante-Columbian History of America.† . . .

"We hope the English translation may be printed in *America*. It ought, however, to be prepared direct from the old Northern or ancient Icelandic original text; otherwise, it will have but little value. We hope to prevail on our English fellow-laborer, John McCaul, M.A., Oxford, — who, in consequence of a long residence in Copenhagen, has acquired a command of the Danish language, and has also paid some attention to the Icelandic, — to undertake the translation, which will afterwards be submitted to an accurate revision by the committee.

* These are now in the cabinet of the Rhode-Island Historical Society.

† Among the earliest members of that Committee was our recently deceased associate, the Hon. Edward Everett.

“In the mean time, it were good that you made some preparatory arrangements for the publishing of this translation in a separate octavo volume. . . . You can now reflect maturely on this matter, letting me know the result. We shall then, if possible, send you the manuscript at the same time that the principal work is sent. The great point, however, is to procure as extensive a circulation as practicable of the original text edition, for the attainment of which we ought to employ our most strenuous exertions; as it is precisely by the greatest circulation of this edition that we can eventually expect a favorable result for science.”

Under date of Copenhagen, July 20, 1837, Professor Rafn writes:—

“Providence has been pleased to grant, that, after seven years of labor, I have now the satisfaction of seeing the ‘*Antiquitates Americanæ*’ brought to a close.

“The number of subscribers is as yet only small; but, now that the work is out, we may venture to hope that it will be considerably increased. This is not only desirable for the sake of the work itself, but, moreover, is very necessary with a view to our future labors. The work has required considerable funds, which it was impossible for the Society to spare from the other undertakings it had previously projected. I was therefore myself obliged to furnish the greater part; otherwise it must have lain unpublished for perhaps another decennium.

“I know that you appreciate my labors in behalf of a good and praiseworthy cause, and that you will contribute all that lies in your power, so that my exertions, and my partiality in favor of the American undertaking, may not hereafter be cramped, while there yet remains so very much to be done.

“That you will take up this work with feelings of some expectation is what I can easily imagine; and it will give me no small satisfaction if your expectations shall be in some measure realized.

“It has been my endeavor to give to the world a faithful edition of these ancient records. You will here find a true picture of the events that are long since passed away. In my disquisitions, I have attempted simply to produce conviction by means of arguments, and have in no manner sought to persuade by the ornaments of style. Here for the first time will be found indicated the precise spots where

the ancient Northmen held their intercourse. In doing this, I hope I have brought forward a clear and convincing proof of the importance of the ancient records.

“The researches concerning the ancient monuments, and respecting the points of resemblance in the language of the Indians, may now be considered as *commenced*, but by no means finished. The members of the Committee on the Ante-Columbian History of America ought in future to labor in concert for the purpose of conferring greater light and certainty on a matter hitherto so obscure. In as far as regards the European members, our very first step is to request an opinion as to what has been already communicated. Afterwards, we shall endeavor to proceed further in our search after the truth.

“Mr. McCaul has translated into English the two Sagas of Erik the Red, and Thorfinn Karlsefne. Agreeably to what you observe, it will doubtless be best to wait until the main work has obtained the necessary circulation before we think of a complete English translation, and then to publish the whole at once, and not in numbers as we proposed. In this way, some years may be occupied in its preparation; and the accounts respecting Greenland, which are important, may be incorporated. In the mean time, to prevent ignorant scribblers from corrupting the accounts by publishing them in an English version, an ‘Historico-Geographical View,’ in English, is prefixed to the work.”*

June 5, 1838, Professor Rafn writes:—

“I am glad the ‘*Antiquitates Americanæ*’ have met with such a favorable reception in the very districts that were visited by our forefathers in days of yore. Here in Europe also, the work has met with a similar reception. The objections which have been made to individual passages, particularly by the ‘*North-American Review*,’ it will not be difficult to answer.”

April 26, 1839, Prof. Rafn addressed a very long communication to me, the contents of which are of such a character that they cannot but prove of interest, whatever may be thought of the writer’s speculations or deductions: I there-

* This was also reprinted in this country in an octavo pamphlet; and several thousand copies were gratuitously distributed, in the hope of contributing to the success of the main work.

fore do not hesitate to extract largely from it. He observes:—

“In my ‘*Antiquitates Americanæ*,’ I have adhered to the method which you also recommend to be followed; viz., to use the greatest possible caution in antiquarian investigations and theories. I have put down as settled only those matters, of the truth of which my researches had given me the fullest conviction. My geographical investigations, it would appear, have met with general approbation. They have been reprinted in many places, and even plagiarized, so that I have every reason to be pleased with their favorable reception.

“Profound Northern investigators have likewise approved of my derivation of the local names *Haup* and *Nausit*. This has induced me to bring forward my earlier Notes of 1835, where I have in greater detail developed this inquiry and pursued the traces discovered.

“I now communicate some of my remarks for your consideration, and beg you to favor me with the sentiments of our friends, and in particular to mention if you know of any derivation of these local names more probable than the one I have here suggested.

“That the projecting half of Barnstable must, by the ancient Scandinavians, have been called *Nesit*, κατ’ ἐξοχήν, is what I have already shown, and is what no one will entertain any doubt of, who is acquainted with the practice of the ancient inhabitants of the North. I have moreover pointed out this circumstance, that the Indians anciently called this promontory *Nauset*; which word, as pronounced by Englishmen, has the very same sound as the *Nesit* of the ancient Northmen, or as the modern Danish *Nosset*.

“The word *nes*, with the definite article annexed *nesit*, is to be recognized besides in several of the terminations of the local names in this district, among which I may here mention —

“*Soconasset* (Suckenicot Point, *Soconusset*, *Sockanosset*), Barnstable, Mass.; probably from the proper name *Socki*, gen. *Socka*, which occurs in the most remote times, as well in Iceland (*Landnáma*, 3 P. 19 c.) as in Greenland (*Grönland’s Hist. Mindesmerker*,* ii. 680), and also in Norway (*Fornm. Sögur*,† ii. 1, 2, 4, 6; iii. 119).

“*Poppinnessit* and *Poponescet*, Barnstable, Mass.; the first being

* Monuments.

† Historical Sagas, recording events out of Iceland.

the name of the town, which is otherwise called *Mashpee* (*Másby*, from *Már*, the name of a man, gen. *Más*, and *byr*, *by*, a town or farm), and the latter the name of Poponescet Bay; but both being undoubtedly one and the same name of the long cape that projects from that arm of the sea. The name may possibly be derived from the proper name *Poppa*, *Poppo*, one of the earliest preachers of Christianity in Denmark (see Fornm. S. xi. 37, 38, 419), and which name has subsequently been given to many persons in our northern countries. Or we might also suppose it to have been *Papanesit* or *Papeynesit* (see *Papar* and *Papey* in Ant. Am. 203, 206), in the possible supposition that *Papar* may have inhabited the island lying opposite, or the cape itself.

"*Hyannes* (according to others, *Hyannas*, *Hyanaes*, *Highanous*), Barnstable, Mass.; either the same name as the Icelandic *Heynes* (Landnáma, 1 P. 17 c.), from *hey*, fœnum, hay; or *Haganes*, from *Hagi*, a meadow; or *Hauganes*, from *haugr*, a hillock. The name *Gamon* seems to have sprung from *hafn*, a harbor, pronounced *hamn*, from which the transition is easy to *gamon*, possibly Hyannes harbor, or roads.

"*Chipinoxet* Point, Warwick, R.I.; derived from *Skip*, a ship, in Icelandic, *Skipsnesit*, or *Skipanesit*, a promontory bearing a striking likeness to a ship, from which a stage is projected to the shore.

"*Quidneasett*, North Kingston, R.I.; a very broad, far-projecting cape, perhaps so named from its resemblance to the womb of an animal; from *quidr*, acc. *quid*, which occurs in compound words (*á Quidnesi*), or perhaps from *Quí*, a sheep-track, or path: compare *Quidal* in the parish of Stadsboigden, bailiwick of Trondhjem, *Quidstrup* and *Quiby* in Jutland. It is probably the same name that has since been transferred to *Quonsett* Point, and is now applied to the extreme point of that broad cape which in some maps is also named *Seconiquonsett*.

"*Hamonasset* Point, or *Hemunasset* Point, Middlesex, Conn., opposite to Long Island; either from one of the proper names *Hamundr* or *Hamall*, or rather perhaps from *heimr*, habitaculum. In this way the derivation is the same as that of *Heimaey* in the Southland of Iceland.

"*Seaconnet*, *Sogconnet*, or *Seconnet*, from *seá*, *sjó*, or *sæ* (acc.; nom. *seár*, *sjór*, *sær*), the sea, the ocean; for all these three forms occur in Icelandic, *cona*, gen. *conu*, a woman, and *nesit* contracted into *net*; so that it becomes *Seáconunesit*, Mermaid Cape.

“As a reason for this interpretation, may be mentioned a popular tradition among the Indians at the Vineyard, about the warrior Maushop’s wife, who for a length of time dwelled on this promontory, and exacted tribute from all those who passed it by water, but who afterwards was transformed into a rock. Her whole figure was to be seen for many a year; but, on the arrival of the English, some of them broke off the arms and the head: nevertheless, the greater part of the body is still to be seen at this day. From the above-mentioned Maushop the Indians often received presents of whales; and he was looked upon by them as a sort of demigod.

“*Assonet*, or *Assoonet*, perhaps *Esiones*, from *esia*, gen. *esio*, a marshy district. The Old-Northern *á*, or, as it is occasionally found in manuscripts, *ó*, amnis, modern Danish *aa*, occurs as a termination in the names of many smaller rivers and streams. The pronunciation is variously indicated in the different modes of spelling; as, for example, *aug*, *ough*, *oag*, and sometimes also *ock*, *uck*; whence a transition has been made to *ucket*: in this way the definite article has been affixed to the termination, the word, after the corruption of the language flowing several centuries, having come to be considered as neuter. As examples of this, we may quote the following:—

“*Mashp-aug* Brook, Cranston, R.I., derived from the proper name *Moshop*, or *Maushop*,—strictly speaking, a warrior who plays a great part in the superstitions of the Vineyard and Nantucket Indians (see Hitchcock’s *Geology*, pp. 204, 205), which name again may possibly be derived from the Icelandic name *Már*, gen. *más*.

“*Ashaw-aug* River, Stonington, Conn., Icelandic *Ásólfssá*; *Osqueip-aug* River, Richmond, R.I., Icelandic *Ósvífrsá*; *Appon-aug*, Warwick, R.I.; *Pascoaug* River, Burrillville, R.I.; *Tommaqu-aug*, Brook, Hopkinton, R.I., Icelandic, *Thormóðará*; *Natchaug* River, Windham, Conn.; *Quinnebaug* River, ib. collate *Quinisá*, parish of Lister, in Norway; *Aspaw-og* River, New London, Conn., Icelandic, *Asbiarnará*; *Shunock* River, Icelandic, *Jónsá*; *Pochaug*, *Petch-aug*, Icelandic, *Thetrsá*; *Schipp-aug* River, Icelandic, *Skipá*, &c.

“The word *vatn*, a lake, gen. *vatns*, pronounced *vats* or *vaz*, the *n* being dropped in the pronunciation, occurs in *Wotchaug* Pond, or, as it is written by others, *Watchoag* Pond, Charleston, R.I.,—the name of a lake into which a rivulet or brook flows. Here both the component syllables are old Danish, or old Northern; since we must interpret them *Vatnsá*, pronounced *Vatsá*, or almost like *Vazá*, consequently identical with the English pronunciation of *Watchaug*. In

Iceland there is a rivulet of the same name, which is mentioned as early as in the 'Landnáma' (3 P. 14 C.), and the name of which has been transferred to a farm on the bank of the stream; whereas, in the present case, the name has been transferred to the pond.

"I would now beg of you to reflect maturely on this matter before any thing is published relating to it. As far as I can judge, these local names furnish a proof that the ancient Northmen have, *during several centuries*, inhabited your district; and that such can be satisfactorily proved is naturally a matter of much interest. It is of great importance to obtain the opinion of Indian scholars; for all due caution ought to be observed."

Under date of Copenhagen, Oct. 17, 1839, Professor Rafn advises:—

"You will with this receive No. 1 of the Society's Memoirs, wherein you will find a more detailed explanation of the terms *dag-málastadr* and *eyktarstadr*, which occur in the Saga of 'Eric the Red.' You will now, I feel persuaded, no longer entertain any doubt as to the correctness of my interpretation; and your honorable governor [Edward Everett] will doubtless no longer hesitate to adopt the same opinion. It is an established custom, that places retain the names which have been imposed on them by their first civilized discoverers. The names of Kialarnes and Furdustrandir are no longer doubtful."

April 21, 1840, Professor Rafn says,—

"I anxiously expect the promised elucidations of my explanation of Indian local names. I wish that nothing should be published on the subject until we arrive at a greater degree of certainty.

"You ask me if I consider the names *Moswetuset* and *Aquiday* to be of old Danish original. I think it not unlikely that they may be such. *Mósvidhúset* (*Mosviédhuset*) is good old Danish, from *Mósvdr*, Mar's wood, and *húset*, the house (*i. e.*, *hús*, with the definite article *et* affixed).

"*Aquiday*, *á Hvitey* (pronounced nearly *a Kvítay*), 'on White Island.' We often find local names formed in this way, with a preposition prefixed. For example, 'The farm was called *á Haugi*.' In the same manner *Aquidnec* might be derived from *á, hvítr*, and *hnacki* (modern Danish, *Nakke*; Anglo-Saxon, *hnecca*), a neck.

“I would deduce *Aquidnesi* from á *Hvítnesi*, and *Quidneesit* from *Hvítnesit*.

“When you write to any of your friends in the district of Fall River, where I have assigned the position of Leifsbúdir, will you have the goodness to request them to send us, as a specimen, some of the grapes which grow wild in that region?”

I will conclude these extracts with the following, from a communication addressed to me Oct. 22, 1841:—

“The *Mösur* specimens * were very acceptable. A correspondent in Ireland lately sent us a piece of wood, which he received some years ago from North America, that the Indians there called *Manser*, or *Mausur*. It would be remarkable enough, if it should turn out that the Old-Northern appellation of this kind of wood had been retained and preserved among the Indians.

“We have lately received from Alexander Humboldt a letter, wherein he expresses his approbation of the result of my geographical disquisitions.

“I request you will prevail on the Hon. John Pickering to communicate his opinion of my explanation of Indian local names in your country. The Old-Northern origin of such names as Nauset and Haup seems beyond a doubt. I beg for your answer in reference to this as soon as possible, as it is my intention to publish my Essay on these names, with a view of eliciting further discussion on this subject.”

It is hardly necessary for me to remark, that the Danish Society labored under a serious mistake in supposing that we had scholars among us familiar with the language and dialects of the Indians, who readily could and cheerfully would aid its members in their philological and linguistic inquiries, and solve the question whether the similarities referred to constituted an additional evidence of the Scandinavian visits, and of an intermixture of the Northmen with the Red men at that period inhabiting New England, or whether they were accidental, though very singular, coincidences.

To the only scholar hereabouts, within my knowledge, pro-

* Samples of curled and bird's-eye maple.

perly qualified to sit in judgment on the case, — I mean the late John Pickering, LL.D., — I communicated Professor Rafn's conjectures, which struck him with much surprise. He said that the subject was one deserving a thorough, critical examination. I consequently furnished him with a copy, which he kept by him, fondly anticipating, as he more than once informed me, the advent of the time when a release from a portion of his professional and other duties would enable him to direct attention to a matter in reference to which Professor Rafn's solicitation, from the delay, became — as his correspondence shows — more and more urgent. I regret to add, that Mr. Pickering died, without the realization of his wish.

The inquirer, and the inquired of, have both passed away; and the letters of inquiry have since remained undisturbed upon my files to the present time.

The last package transmitted by Professor Rafn reached me but a short period before his death, and whilst I was preparing to renew more regularly a correspondence which of late years had been, on my part, almost entirely, though reluctantly, suspended by circumstances quite beyond my control.

This package contained, among other documents, one very briefly alluding to the Danish Society's proceedings on the occasion of the death of their illustrious President, King Frederic VII. of Denmark, who had presided over their deliberations for nearly a quarter of a century with distinguished honor and marked acceptance; having been chosen to the high position several years prior to ascending the throne, in consequence of the active interest he had taken in the objects of the Society, — an interest which not only continued unabated, but was throughout his life ever on the increase.

One of many papers prepared by him was mentioned by Dr. Sparks at our December meeting; viz., "An account of

the probable mode in which was constructed the Giants' Halls," so called ; an appellation used for a similar reason, probably, to that which suggested in our own country the name of Giants' Fields, popularly applied to designate the regions wherein the remains of the Mastodon were found to abound. The one was deemed the work, perhaps residence, and the other the burial-grounds, of giants. The structures treated of by the President-King are what are generally known as Cromlechs, and often described as Druidical remains ; a representation of one of which may be found at the end of the paper referred to, whereof a copy is laid upon the table.

Accompanying this, there was sent me by Professor Rafn a photograph representing his Majesty presiding at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, surrounded by numerous ancient relics discovered by him, which he is describing to the members. Whoever looks upon it will be convinced that he was "every inch a man ;" and all, I am sure, will join me in hoping that his successor in the presidency and on the throne will imitate his noble example, for the benefit of literature and science, and the promotion and extension of historic truth.

In justice to myself, I would say that my remarks relative to Professor Rafn are necessarily very imperfect ; I having received no communication and seen no notice respecting him since his demise.

In writing this hastily penned article, my thoughts involuntarily, and quite unexpectedly, wandered far from what I apprehend was the purpose had in view by the gentleman whose inquiry has led to my trespassing so long upon the time of the Society. I have, therefore, since the meeting at which this was to have been presented, prepared a paper, chiefly from materials collected many years ago, upon Inscription Rocks in general (especially those which have come under my personal observation in New England, and between

the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific coast), and the Assonet Rock in particular, concerning which last, the usual stir has of late been made that pretty regularly recurs after a certain limited period. As the reading of this would consume more time than has been already occupied by me, I will spare the Society the infliction, and submit it unread as a portion of the present communication, or reserve it for some future sitting, incorporating therein the opinions of Professors Rafn, Magnusen, and others, in regard to the Assonet Inscription.

MARCH MEETING.

The Society held its stated monthly meeting this day, Thursday, March 9, at 11 o'clock, A.M., — the President in the chair.

The Librarian announced donations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the New-England Loyal Publication Society; the proprietors of the "Heraldic Journal;" the publishers of the "Savannah Republican;" Mr. George Arnold; Amos Bonsall, Esq.; J. Francis Fisher, Esq.; Rush C. Hawkins, Esq.; John Holmes, Esq.; Benjamin P. Johnson, Esq.; Thomas S. Kirkbride, M.D.; Rev. Edwin M. Stone; and from Messrs. Amory, W. G. Brooks, Felt, Green, Hale, Metcalf, Washburn, Webb, and Winthrop, of the Society.

The President referred to a volume lying upon the table, of "College Essays, delivered in Trinity College, Cambridge, by William Everett," a son of our late dis-